

BARRE GAZETTE

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Board hears input regarding mascot

By Paula Ouimette
Staff writer

NORTH BROOKFIELD -- The North Brookfield School Committee listened to opinions on whether or not the district's mascot, and the team name, Indians, should be retired. The committee will vote on it at their December meeting.

Earlier in the school year the committee was presented with a petition by North Brookfield residents, and alumni of the school, to change the mascot and team name.

Forty-seven people joined the meeting remotely, most of them to hear opinions regarding the school's mascot. The School Committee invited a panel of eight Native American speakers to the Zoom meeting to share their insights on the school district's mascot, the Indian.

Dr. Laurel Davis-Delano, a professor at Springfield College and member of the Massachusetts Mascot Coalition Steering Committee, thanked the School Committee for the invitation to speak and introduced the panel of speakers.

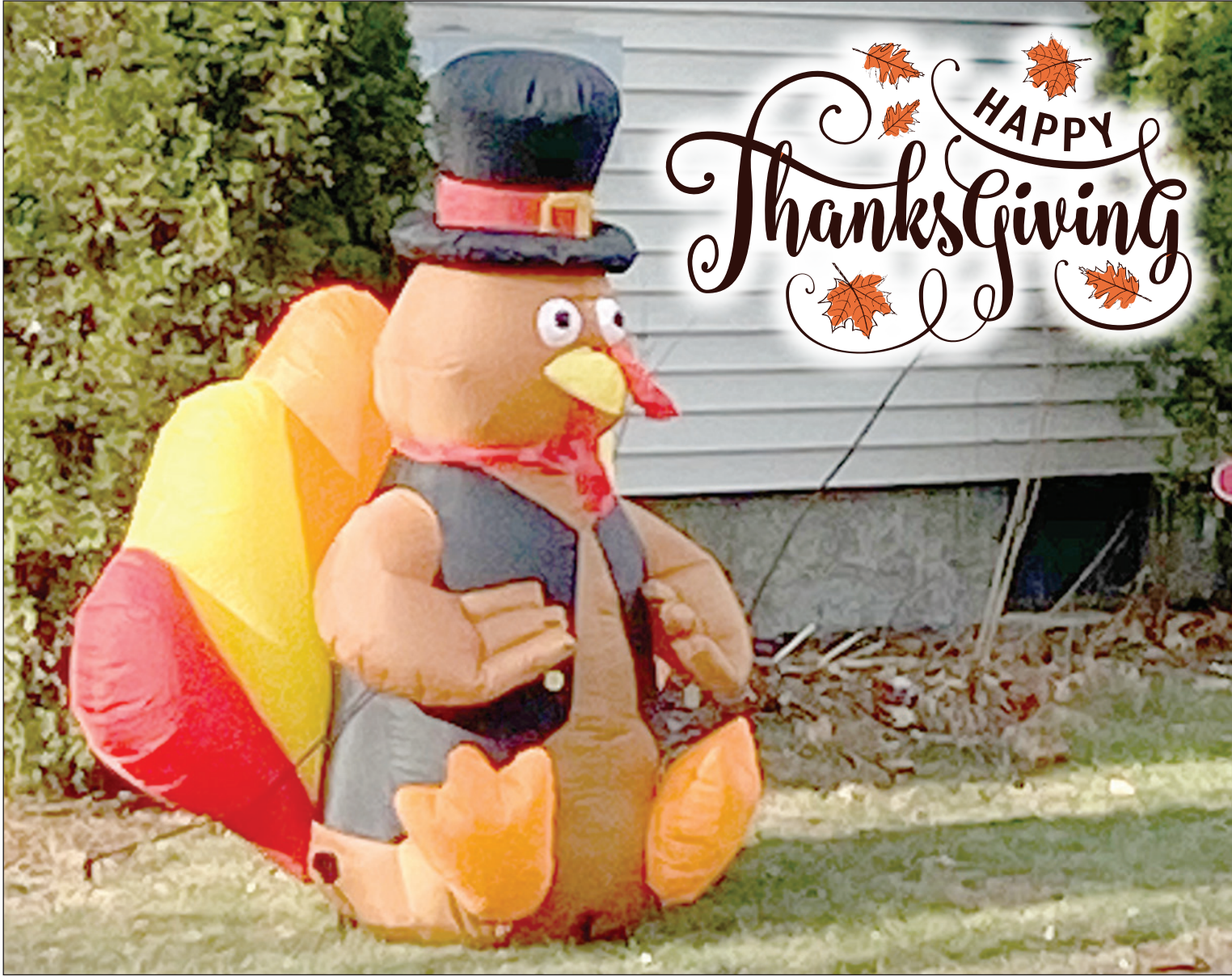
Melissa Ferretti, from the Herring Pond Wampanoag Tribe of Plymouth, was the first to speak. "The fact that racist ideas about native peoples in Massachusetts are deeply ingrained, and are reflected in sports teams, mascots, should not have to be explained in 2020," she said. "Especially since native activists and educators have worked so hard and for so long to educate Americans about this. She stated that the use of these stereotypical mascots erases their tribal identity and history, and that they will not be silent and will continue to educate Americans about the challenges that Native people have faced for over 400 years.

Faries Gray, the sagamore or war chief, of the Massachusetts Tribe at Ponkapoag. Gray explained why he felt it was wrong for schools to use these mascots, and detailed the controversial history of Native Americans and colonial settlers. "Basically we were held prisoner in our own home," he said. "So if you fast forward to where we are today, you have the indigenous people here in the commonwealth, and the entire United States, all assimilated into this colonial way of thinking, all of us are assimilated...and then when you look up and you see a high school with our mascot on it, you think to yourself, 'Am I a trophy? Is that what we are?'" Gray said.

He said some people feel indigenous people should feel honored for being used as mascots. "We are not honored. You are not honoring us," he said. He said he knows this was not done intentionally, but that he was here today to stop this. He said no other race is used as a mascot and it is harmful to himself, his children, and his race.

Rhonda Anderson, commissioner to Indian Affairs in Western

See NB SCHOOL COMMITTEE, page 9



HUBBARDSTON – A turkey greets passersby in Hubbardston reminding them of the holiday to come, and bringing a little holiday spirit.

Turley Publications staff photo by Eileen Kennedy

Mass Central Rail Trail feasibility study released



Turley Publications staff photo by Paula Ouimette

A feasibility study to complete the Mass Central Rail Trail was recently released by MassDOT, showing how a stretch between Belchertown and Hudson/Berlin town line can be finished. This is a sign in the New Braintree section of an already existing section of the trail.

State considers it an important trail

By Eileen Kennedy
Staff writer

REGION – Eventually, the Mass Central Rail Trail will run from Northampton to Boston, and MassDOT has released a feasibility plan detailing what is needed to complete the 68.5 mile section. It runs from the end of the Norwottuck Rail Trail in Belchertown to the I-495 area at the Hudson/Berlin town line, and the state says it is a priority to complete. When the entire trail is

built out it will run for 104 miles.

The study focuses on the 68.5 miles that run between Belchertown and Hudson, of which 17.5 miles already exist and 51 miles need to be built out. The state has rated the difficulty level of a number of pieces that still need work, with 20.2 miles rated moderately difficult to implement and 22.4 miles rated as highly difficult. Nine new bridges would be necessary to complete the trail, according to the state.

This study divides the MCRT analysis into three segments. The first one goes from the easternmost part of the Norwottuck

Rail Trail in Belchertown to the Massachusetts Central Rail Road corridor at the east bank of the Swift River in Bondsville, a village of Palmer. The second segment goes from the Swift River in Bondsville to the Ware River in Barre. The third section goes from Glenwood Road in Rutland to Stone Road in Berlin, which is just east of the I-495 underpass, Berlin/Hudson town line.

Within those segments are highly detailed notes about what obstacles are in the way, including whether it is a physical problem, such as a missing bridge

See RAIL TRAIL, page 9

Gail Gramarossa chosen to head federal grant

\$1.5 million to work on drug use prevention

By Eileen Kennedy
Staff writer

WARE – Gail Gramarossa's heart has always been in health education and now she will be heading up a strategic substance use prevention grant awarded to the Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance, which she helped write.

The federal grant will provide \$1.5 million over five years to work with youth and young adults to help prevent their use of alcohol, nicotine and marijuana. It will be extension of her volunteering with the Quaboag Hills Community Coalition, and its partner, the Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance, since the two organizations were formed about six years ago. During that time she has helped bring a diverse group of people together to work on issues including substance use prevention and education, and to bring recovery services to the area.

Grant for area towns

The grant will provide \$300,000 a year, and was awarded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is a Strategic Prevention Framework – Partnerships for Success grant and will focus on youth 18 and under and young adults 19 to 25-years-old, she said. It will use evidence-based curricula, she said, to focus on preventing



Turley Publications courtesy photo

Gail Gramarossa has been chosen to head a \$1.5 million, five-year grant that will offer drug prevention education in the Quaboag Hills region to those under 18 as well as young people 19 to 25.

young people from using of alcohol, nicotine and marijuana.

The region for both the coalition and the alliance is spread out over three counties, including Brimfield, Holland, Monson, Palmer and Wales in Hampden County, Ware and Belchertown in Hampshire County and Brookfield, East Brookfield, Hardwick, New Braintree, North Brookfield, Warren and West Brookfield in Worcester County. The same towns will be covered by the new federal grant.

Knowing the people

One of the aspects of the grant she thinks is important is it will support individual towns build hyper-local coalitions in their own towns, Gramarossa said.

"The people living in these towns know what is needed and

See GRAMAROSSA, page 9

BARRE GAZETTE

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News of the Towns



Round Town

Ellenor Downer
413-967-3505

OES to hold annual cookie and gift sale

Cradle Rock Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star is holding its Annual Christmas Cookie Sale and Gift Table Saturday, Dec. 5 from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Mt Zion Masonic Building, 71 Pleasant St. All COVID-19 protocols will be in place to ensure a safe environment. Masks must be worn. Cookies are \$6 per pound and people can pick from their favorites or try something new. After people have selected their cookies, members of Cradle Rock will put them in a closeable container to enjoy.

Lions Club

The Barre Lions Club decided to go ahead with its annual Christmas Tree Stand and Sale on the Barre Town Common. The Lions expects to set up its stand the day after Thanksgiving. The actual trees are expected to arrive late Saturday morning. The club ordered only 50 trees and they will be sold on a first come, first served basis. Trees will be priced at \$35 with the exception of a few "beauties," which will be priced accordingly on site. The stand will be open late afternoon on Thursdays and Fridays and all day Saturday and all day Sunday until the last tree is sold. If the lights are on, the stand will be open. If you need to talk with a Lion or have a pressing need for a tree, call Joe Petracone at 978 660-8730 or Barry or Jean Alman at 978 355-2720. Happy Holidays and stay safe.

Cultural Council grants

The Barre Cultural Council set a Dec 14 postmark deadline for organizations, schools and individuals to apply for grants that support cultural activities in the community. These grants can support a variety of artistic projects and actives in Barre including exhibits, festivals, short-term artist residencies or performance in schools, workshops and lectures. The Barre Cultural Council will also entertain funding proposals from schools and youth groups to provide subsidies for school-ages children to attend cultural field trips. The Barre Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 cities and town in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the largest grass roots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, sciences and humanities every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community. This year, due to State budget not being approved, the Barre Cultural Council is not yet aware of its allocations. Applications forms and more information about the local Cultural Council Program are available online at www.mass-culturecouncil.org. The Barre Cultural Council accepts paper applications via mail at Barre Cultural Council, 40 West St., Suite 5, Barre, MA 01005.

Womens Fellowship wreath sale

Due to the pandemic it has been decided that there will be no fair at the Barre Congregational Church this year. The Womens Fellowship will hold its annual wreath sale. The wreaths will be available the first week in December. They come decorated with a simple bow or with decoration of choice. The wreaths will be \$28 this year and are 14inches in diameter. People wishing to purchase a wreath may call Wendy Isgro at 978-928-5180.

Dismas Farm to hold tree sale

OAKHAM – Dismas Farm, 687 Lincoln Road, will hold its second annual tree sale Saturday, Nov. 28 and Saturday, Dec. 5 and 12 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be homemade Christmas crafts, cookies, cocoa and socially distanced hayrides.

Mount Grace presents virtual photography presentation



Turley Publications Photo by Jeff Blanchard

This snowy owl was photographed by Jeff Blanchard.

Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust will celebrate #GivingTuesday, Tuesday, Dec. 1, with a special presentation by local wildlife photographer Jeff Blanchard via Zoom. Starting at 7 p.m., Blanchard will share his photographs of wildlife in the North Quabbin region and the stories of taking those shots.

#GivingTuesday is a global day of giving that harnesses the collective power of individuals, communities, and organizations to encourage giving worldwide. As a non-profit protecting significant land in the North Quabbin region and beyond, Mount Grace hopes to inspire generosity for land conservation on #GivingTuesday for the benefit of local wildlife. Every gift made to Mount Grace on December 1st will be matched up to \$3,000.

Funds raised through the event will support the conservation of farms, forests, and public spaces for recreation.

"We're very excited about plans for a new canoe access point to the Connecticut River on protected land in Montague," said Marielena Lima, "and we have also been able to complete our 4th Whole Farm Forever project, the conservation of Sunset View Farm in Winchendon, thanks to online support. I hope you will join us to enjoy Jeff's amazing images and to support the land."

Partnering with Stone Cow Brewery in Barre, Red

Apple Farm in Phillipston, Moon Hill Brewing Company in Gardner, and Element Brewing and Distilling in Millers Falls for this event, Mount Grace encourages all to shop locally and purchase their cider or beer before the event to enjoy during the presentation. Register for this virtual event on the Mount Grace website at https://www.mountgrace.org/events. Mount Grace will also be participating in #GivingTuesday online on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. For more information visit: https://www.mountgrace.org/donate. Direct any questions regarding the event to Marielena Lima at lima@mountgrace.org or 978-541-1762.

Barre Lions get ready to sell Christmas trees on Common

BARRE — The Barre Lions Club (BLC) has decided to go ahead with its annual Christmas Tree Stand and Sale on the Barre Town Common. 2020 has been a trying year, but the BLC knows that owning a Christmas tree will go a long way to cheering people up this holiday season. The BLC expects to set up its stand the day after Thanksgiving. The actual trees

are expected to arrive late Saturday morning. The BLC has ordered only 50 trees and they will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

Trees will be available for sale as soon as they arrive on the Common. Trees will be priced at \$35 with the exception of a few "beauties" which will be priced accordingly on site. The stand will be open late afternoon on

Thursdays and Fridays and all day Saturday and all day Sunday until the last tree is sold. Look for the lights.

If the lights are on, the stand will be open. If you need to talk with a Lion or have a pressing need for a tree, call Joe Petracone at 978 660-8730 or Barry or Jean Alman at 978 355-2720. Happy Holidays and stay safe.

Have Something to Share?

Send your stories and photos to edowner@turley.com

Hubbardston

Ellenor Downer
edowner@turley.com



Hubbardston to hold Light Bright

Light Bright would be held the first week of December. Applications for entries in the house decorating contest are available on the town website and Facebook.

Cultural Council grant proposals

The Hubbardston Cultural Council announces that it will be accepting grant proposals to support community-oriented arts, humanities and science programs. Grant applications will be accepted until Monday, Dec.14. According to Council spokesperson William Shea, these grants can support a variety of artistic projects and activities in Hubbardston including exhibits, festivals, field trips, short-term artist residencies, performances in schools, workshops and lectures. The Hubbardston Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils (LCCs) serving all 351 communities in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, sciences and humanities every year. The state Legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to every community.

While the total amount of funding available will be contingent upon the Mass Cultural Council's FY 21 state budget appropriation, in past years the Hubbardston Cultural Council awarded over \$5,000 in grants per year. Previously funded projects included local musical performances at the Hubbardston Senior Center; Magical Potter's Wheel; blacksmith demonstrations, pastel paint lessons and more. Anyone interested in submitting a grant proposal can do so by contacting William Shea at 978-928-4440 or writing him at Billshea@tiac.net. They can also go directly to https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/localculturalcouncilprogram/application-process to file their application.

Medicare enrollment

It's that time of year again for Medicare enrollment. During the annual Medicare Open Enrollment Period from Thursday, Oct. 15 through Tuesday, Dec. 7, people have a chance to change their Medicare plan for next year. A trained Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE) counselor provides free unbiased help so people can better understand their plan changes, as well as options to save on Medicare healthcare costs. People may call the Hubbardston Senior Center at 978-928-1400, extension 211 and ask for a SHINE phone appointment.

Senior center activities

The Hubbardston Senior Center continues to slowly open. The senior center has space limitations, only 10 people allowed in the building at a time. Monday and Wednesday mornings Coffee With Friends is from 9 to 11 a.m. On Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9 to 11 a.m. is the Walking Club. Due to space limitations, please call to register for any of the activities below: Bingo: Monday 12-3 p.m. call Flo 978-928-5113 to register. Meals on Wheels: Call the Senior Center 978-928-1400 extension 211. Food delivery on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Thursday is drive thru for food and eggs is 9:30 a.m. to noon. This schedule is subject to change due to Covid restrictions.

OES to hold annual cookie and gift sale

BARRE – Cradle Rock Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star is holding its Annual Christmas Cookie Sale and Gift Table Saturday, Dec. 5 from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Mt Zion Masonic Building, 71 Pleasant St. All COVID-19 protocols will be in place to ensure a safe environment. Masks must be worn. Cookies are \$6 per pound and people can pick from their favorites or try something new. After people have selected their cookies, members of Cradle Rock will put them in a closeable container to enjoy.

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News of the Towns

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Note: Many meetings are closed to the public or will be held remotely.

BARRE

Felton Field Commission – Dec. 1 at 6:30 p.m.
Council on Aging – Dec. 2 at 1 p.m.
QRSD Collective Bargaining Subcommittee – Dec. 2 at 3:30 p.m.
Barre Housing Authority – Dec. 3 at 3 p.m.
QRSD Special Education Subcommittee – Dec. 4 at 9:30 a.m.
Historical Commission – Dec. 7 at 7 p.m.
Cable Advisory Committee – Dec. 8 at 7 p.m.
Library Trustees – Dec. 9 at 7 p.m.
Board of Health – Dec. 14 at 5 p.m.
Water Commission – Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m.
DPW Commission – Dec. 14 at 7 p.m.
Cemetery Commission – Dec. 24 at 11 a.m.

HARDWICK

Recycling Commission – Dec. 1 at 6:30 p.m.
Board of Health – Dec. 2 at 7 p.m.
Paige Library Trustees – Dec. 3 at 7 p.m.
Council on Aging – Dec. 10 at 9:30 a.m.
Gilbertville Public Library – Dec. 11 at 4 p.m.
Gilbertville-Wheelwright Sewer Commissioners – Dec. 14 at 6 p.m.

HUBBARDSTON

Board of Selectmen – Nov. 30 and Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m.
Conservation Commission – Dec. 1 at 7 p.m.
Planning Board – Dec. 3 at 6:30 p.m.
Board of Library Trustees – Dec. 3 at 7 p.m.
Historical Commission – Dec. 5 at 10 a.m.
Town Center Committee – Dec. 17 at 7 p.m.
Open Space Committee – Dec. 29 at 7 p.m.

PETERSHAM

Open Space and Recreation Committee – Dec. 1 at 6:30 p.m.
Board of Health – Dec. 3 at 7 p.m.
Cemetery Commission – Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.
Council on Aging – Dec. 14 at 10 a.m.
Planning Board – Dec. 24 at 7 p.m.

RUTLAND

Special Town Meeting – Dec. 3 rescheduled from Nov. 12

Rutland Historical Society brings Santa to town Dec. 5 and 6

RUTLAND – The Rutland Historical Society invites people to join in this year's "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" holiday event Saturday, Dec. 5 from 3-8 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 6 from 4-7 p.m.

Although Rutland Historical Society's annual Festival of Trees event had to be postponed due to the pandemic, the Rutland Festival of Trees Committee was determined to keep the holiday fun and spirit alive in a safe way. The Rutland Historical Society's Festival

of Trees Committee has been busy planning a Santa's Magical Village drive through of holiday displays including an optional drive through visit with Santa and more.

Santa's Magical Village will be held at the former Rutland Heights property but will begin at the entrance of Naquag School. As you travel in your car viewing the displays set up by creative people from the Rutland community, cars can stop by at the Reindeer Dust station, greet Santa's elves or drop off letters

to Santa as well. Santa letters can also be dropped off at the Santa mailbox outside at the Rutland Library. Remember, Santa letters need to include return addresses so he can reply to you.

In addition to Santa's Magical Village, the Rutland Historical Society's Festival of Trees 30th Annual Town Tree Lighting will be at the Rutland Town Common on Saturday, Dec. 5 at 6:30 p.m. The tree lighting will also be a drive through event.

Postponements and cancellations due to the coronavirus pandemic

- St. Mary's Women's Club of Orange cancelled its Annual Fall Parish Fair. The decision was made to cancel the fair and try to hold the fair or at least parts of the fair, in the spring. It is unclear yet what this means, but most likely the chili, beans, beef stew and pies will be offered as take out and the raffles for cash and scratch tickets, restaurant gift certificates, etc. will be held in the spring. Club members will be soliciting gift certificates after the New Year for the Restaurant Raffle, and members will be selling raffle tickets in early spring. The date for the fair and drawings will be set in the early spring.
- The Barre Congregational

Church Womens Fellowship decided to not hold its fair this year due to the pandemic. They will hold the annual wreath sale. The wreaths will be available the first week of December. The wreaths will be \$28 this year and are 14 inches in diameter. To order a wreath, people should call Wendy Isgro, at 978-928-5180.

• Due to the social distancing requirements with the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual Christmas in New Braintree Craft Fair will not be held in December 2020. Next year's fair will take place Saturday, Dec. 11, 2021.

• Given the current surge in COVID cases in the state, and with an abundance of caution for the health and safety of the

cast and crew, Theatre at the Mount's live stream production of Winter Wonderettes is cancelled.

• Although Rutland Historical Society's annual Festival of Trees event had to be postponed due to the pandemic, the Rutland Festival of Trees Committee was determined to keep the holiday fun and spirit alive in a safe way. The Rutland Historical Society's Festival of Trees Committee has been busy planning a Santa's Magical Village drive through of holiday displays including an optional drive through visit with Santa and more Saturday, Dec. 5 from 3-8 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 6 from 4-7 p.m.

Bigelow Library lists upcoming events

CLINTON – Even during the pandemic, the Bigelow library is here to help. The library is still providing library loans (order online with the pick-up location as "Clinton" or call a library staff member for help) keeping safety first in mind with curbside pick-up provided from the "Book Shack." Discount museum passes are still available for access to the museums and parks, which have opened to the general public. The library continues to provide wonderful programs to patrons of all ages, just check out the library calendar at <http://bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/> for the list of upcoming events and how to register. The library is now providing access to the library's technology (computers, printers and faxes) by limited, appointment only access with strict social distancing guidelines in place for everyone's safety. People may call 978-365-4160 and speak to a staff member for more details.

Register to receive the Zoom meeting invitation at (<http://bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/>)

Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 6:30 p.m. is Bullet Journaling with Betsy Perry-Zoom Presentation. Millions of people around the world have discovered bullet journaling as the best way for them to plan, and reflect on their goals. Equal parts planner, diary and written meditation a bullet journal will provide you with a more productive way to reach your professional and personal goals. Registrants will be provided with the materials to start their bullet journals before the Zoom presentation so you can work along-side Betsy as she presents the ins and outs of bullet journaling. Register at <http://bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/>

Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 4 p.m. is Making Watercolor Bookmarks for Your Favorite Booklover- Live recording. The Bigelow Library staff will demonstrate how to create a beautiful watercolor bookmark using simple materials and techniques. This demonstration is for all ages. Register at <http://bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/>

bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/

Tuesday, Dec. 15 at 6:30 p.m. is Virtual Author Visit with Professor J.D. Wells author of "The Kidnapping Club: Wall Street, Slavery and Resistance on the Eve of the Civil War"- Zoom Presentation. Meet the author via Zoom and learn more about the book and his research. Register at <http://bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/>

Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 6:30 p.m. is Making Organic Skin Cream a Live recording. Tune in when the Bigelow Library staff teach participants how to create a skin-nourishing, homemade organic body cream that is long-wearing and luxurious. Registrants will receive a package of supplies in advance of the demonstration (essential oils not included). Register at <http://bigelowlibrary.org/calendar/>

For more information, people may contact the Bigelow Free Public Library, 54 Walnut St at 978-365-4061 or mfournier@cwmar.org.

Princeton Art Society to hold virtual holiday marketplace Dec. 4 to Dec. 30

PRINCETON – The Princeton Arts Society invites people to a virtual small works and holiday marketplace. They may shop at PrincetonArts.org.

It will be open 24 hours per day from Dec. 4 to 30.

The society's artists always love seeing customers in person, but the coronavirus has different plans for all this year.

People may visit the online gallery website and choose gifts done by local artists. Each has worked hard to offer beautiful pieces. Holiday shopping will be made all the more meaningful by supporting local artists.

The marketplace has fine art and artisan-made, affordable holiday gift items made

by members of the Princeton Arts Society. There are small wall art pieces, jewelry, cards, prints, ornaments, fabric items and much, much more. Almost 30 years old, the Princeton Arts Society is a nonprofit organization promoting the arts in Central Massachusetts through programs, events, and shows.

Oakham

Ellenor Downer
edowner@turley.com



Dismas Farm to hold tree sale

Dismas Farm, 687 Lincoln Road, will hold its second annual tree sale Saturday, Nov. 28 and Saturday, Dec. 5 and 12 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be homemade Christmas crafts, cookies, cocoa and socially distanced hayrides.

'Light up Oakham'

The Oakham Parks and Recreation will host the first ever "Light up Oakham" Holiday Decorating Contest. Oakham residents may show off their illumination talents. Participants may email parksandrec@oakham-ma.gov to enter the contest by Sunday, Nov. 22. The house should be decorated for voting by Saturday, Dec. 5. People may vote for their favorite between Dec. 5 through Dec. 12. Map and on-line voting form will be available on the Oakham Parks and Recreation Facebook Page. People, who do not Internet capabilities may email Parks and Recreation for a map. First place prize is a giant inflatable Gemmy Animated Projection Airblown Santa and Dogs Decorating Tree Scene standing 9.5 feet tall and second place prize is an inflatable snowman family standing 6 feet tall. Winners will be announced Saturday, Dec. 19.

Senior grab and go lunches

The Back Door Cafe started providing grab and go lunches. The lunches feature meal site meals and are available Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. To place a reservation for a meal, peoples must call 508-882-5251 at least 48 hours ahead. They may order meals for more than one day to make it easier. Seniors should call Tuesday for at Thursday meal and call Thursday for a Monday meal, as the site is not open Fridays. People then drive to the back of the Oakham Town Hall at the time arranged. They stay in their vehicle while receiving their meal. Suggested donation for each meal is \$2.50.

Oakham Historical Association

The museum, a two-story late-1700s farmhouse, also known as the Fobes-O'Donnell house, showcases the town's rich history through exhibits, military memorabilia, photos, books, historical clothing and special collections. The Annex houses several large artifacts, such as the 1860s hearse, sleigh and many other artifacts. Individuals interested in visiting the Museum and the Annex may call Linda Housman, curator, at 508-882-3990 or 508-335-4633 to schedule an appointment. The museum and annex, located at 1221 Old Turnpike Road, are free and welcome visitors of all ages. The Oakham Historical Association reminds visitors that face coverings are required and sanitizing lotion is available.

Church services

Sunday, Nov. 29 the Oakham Congregational Church will hold Sunday worship service at 10 a.m. in the church sanctuary. Sunday School will be held in Fellowship Hall. People should wear a mask and practice social distancing in the sanctuary and at Sunday School.

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Barre Dining Center

BARRE — Elder Services of Worcester Area Nutrition Program welcomes guests to dine at the Barre Senior Center, 557 South Barre Road. The following meals will be served for the week of Nov. 30.

Meal sites are closed and there are only Meals on Wheels deliveries.

Volunteers are needed at the Barre dining site. Volunteers are needed for Meals on Wheels (mileage reimbursement) and in the kitchen. People should contact 978-355-5027.

MON. – Teriyaki beef, steamed rice, broccoli, pears, fortune cookie, whole wheat bread

TUES. – Vegetable cheese bake, seasoned potatoes, mixed vegetables, fresh fruit, Italian bread

WED. – Chicken Milano, wild rice, spinach, peaches, pumpkin bread

THURS. – Salisbury steak, gravy, garlic mashed potatoes, glazed carrots, cookie, sandwich roll

FRI. – Fish with crumb topping, rice pilaf, California blend vegetables, butterscotch pudding, sugar free vanilla pudding, marble rye bread, tartar sauce

*Diabetic friendly dessert

**Higher sodium entree

Meal includes milk and margarine. Menus are subject to change. All meals are served at about 11:45 a.m. each weekday. Reservations should be made the day before by calling 978-355-5027 before 10:30 a.m. The donation of \$2.50 per meal helps keep the program running.

Corrections policy

The Barre Gazette will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2. To request a correction, send information to Editor Ellenor Downer at barrenews@turley.com or call 978-355-4000. Corrections may also be requested in writing at Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

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Opinion

Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Questions about registering for Social Security

By Russell Gloor
Guest columnist

Dear Rusty: I have a big 65th birthday coming up mid-March and would like your advice on registering for Social Security and Medicare. I am now unemployed, but I am seeking another gig to get me to age 67 before taking Social Security. Signed: Wondering Senior

Dear Wondering: You do not need to “register” with Social Security in advance. You don’t need to do anything with Social Security until you are ready to claim your benefits. Since you were born in 1956, your full retirement age (FRA) for Social Security purposes is 66 plus 4 months, and that is when you will be entitled to 100% of the benefit you’ve earned from a lifetime of working.

But you can, if you wish, also wait beyond your FRA to get an even bigger benefit. For each month you delay after your FRA you’ll earn Delayed Retirement Credits of .667%, which is 8% additional benefit for each year you wait. That can continue up to age 70 when your maximum benefit will be reached. In your case that would mean an age 70 benefit 29% more than your FRA benefit amount. But whenever you’re ready, you can apply for Social Security online at www.ssa.gov/retire (you must first create your “My Social Security” account to apply online).

Medicare is an entirely separate program and, unless you have “creditable” employer healthcare coverage from a new job, you should enroll in Medicare a bit prior to your 65th birthday (“creditable” coverage is a group plan with at least 20 participants). This would be during your Medicare Initial Enrollment Period (IEP), which is a 7-month window starting three months before the month you turn 65 and ending 3 months after the month you turn 65. If you don’t enroll in Medicare during your IEP and enroll later, and if you didn’t have creditable employer healthcare coverage after age 65, you will be subject to a late enrollment penalty, which will permanently increase your Medicare Part B (and Part D) premiums.

Medicare Part B is coverage for doctors and outpatient services, and Part D is prescription drug coverage, both of which require a premium; Medicare Part A is hospitalization coverage which is free if you’re eligible for Social Security. If you have “creditable” employer coverage when you turn 65, you can simply delay enrolling in Medicare Part B until your employer coverage is about to end, or until after it ends during an eight-month Special Enrollment Period during which you can enroll in Medicare Part B without penalty. But for Part D prescription drug coverage, you must enroll in a private plan within 63 days of your 65th birthday, or the end of your employer drug coverage, or you will incur a Part D late enrollment penalty for enrolling later. And remember that Medicare late enrollment penalties never go away – they are recurring for the rest of your life.

The bottom line is this: you don’t need to pre-register for either Social Security or Medicare. You can simply enroll when you are ready for benefits to start (keeping in mind that for Medicare, you must have “creditable” alternative coverage after age 65 to avoid late enrollment penalties).

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation’s staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit the AMAC website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email AMAC at ssadvisior@amacfoundation.org.

Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

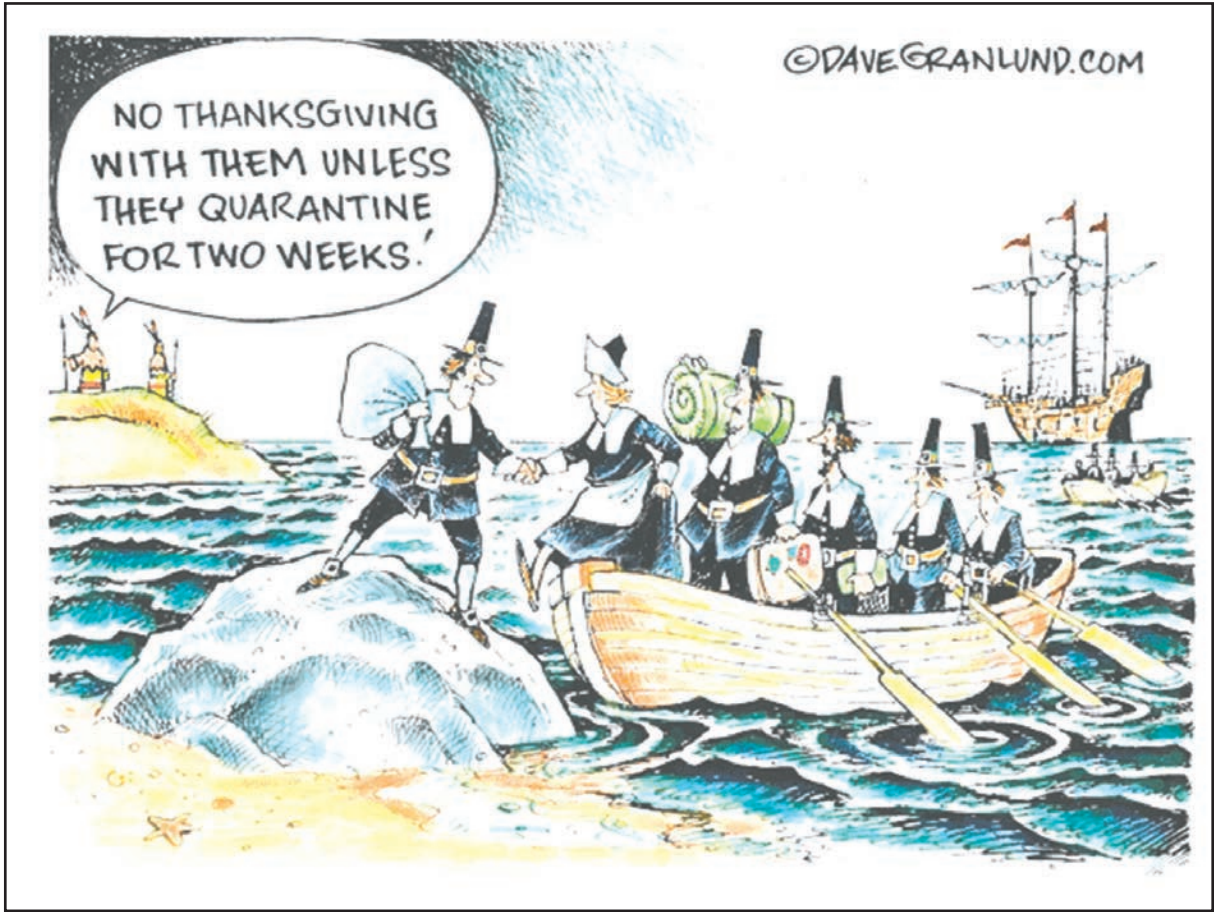
Election letters to the editor welcome

The Barre Gazette welcomes readers to participate in this year’s election campaigns by writing letters to the editor for publication on these pages. Letters of up to 250 words from local residents endorsing candidates on the ballot or discussing campaign issues should be sent to Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005, faxed to 978-355-6274 or emailed to edowner@turley.com. Please include a daytime telephone number for verification purposes (it will not be printed). Letters must be received by noon Tuesday to be considered for that Thursday’s newspaper. No attack letters will be printed. No letters written by candidates supporting their own candidacy will be printed. If the volume of letters received is larger than the space available in the newspaper, or if the letters become repetitive, the newspaper reserves the right to print a representative sample. No endorsement letters will be printed in the last edition before the election. For more information, call editor Ellenor Downer at 978-355-4000.

Campaign news

As part of its election coverage, the newspaper plans to print stories about contested races for Congress, state Senate, state House, district attorney and Governor’s Council during the weeks leading up to the election, as well as a question-and-answer voters guide. In order to ensure fairness to all candidates, no political press releases will be printed, nor will reporters cover political rallies or fundraisers.

Candidates who wish to further publicize their candidacy, beliefs and events may contact Tim Mara, 978-355-2254 or tmara@turley.com, about paid advertising in the Barre Gazette.



In Past Pages

5 years ago (Nov. 26, 2015)

The Christmas in Barre Committee decorates the town commons for the holidays. This dedicated group of volunteers starts planning for the annual Christmas event in the summer. Most the lights are already in place and wait for Santa Claus to make his appearance to turn on the slight switch the first Saturday in December. Sharon Proctor, chair of the committee, states that each member oversees some part of the events. All help with decorating. Judy Ruskowski takes care of the craft fair; Corice Boyer, face painting and balloon animals; Margo Petracone, the parade; Teri Mars, donations and Sandy Hood, publicity.

There’s a new girls’ basketball boss in town, Quabbinites, and if his past is any indication, he’s going to give the Panthers wings in the defensive sense. Recently, Quabbin athletic director Ryan Burnett has been named as the high school girls’ basketball program’s new varsity coach, effective immediately. Burnett, an Air Force veterans, steps into the South Streeters’ first seat occupied the last few years by Bill Speckler, who stepped away from the position following the June graduation of his daughter, Paige.

Four Quabbin varsity field hockey players will be celebrating their turkey day on the road as they travel to Richmond, Va., to play in the annual Shooting Stars Tournament, an exciting three-day event. Alexa Giarusso, Nikole Lampila, Jillian Schlegel and Tiana Morin, all seniors and students of QRHS are members of Worcester County United (WCU), a premier club field hockey team, consisting of high level players from across Worcester County and beyond.

10 years ago (Dec. 2, 2010)

The holidays and homemade pie go fork-in-hand and the Barre Senior Center’s recent annual baking contest proved once again how popular a well-made dessert can be. This year’s event featured contestants making their best pumpkin pie, which were judged by a panel of experts. Barre administrative assistant Heather Lemieux, Barre Police Chief Erik Demetropoulos and library director Stephanie Carpenter were judges. Winners were: First place, Herbert Holmes, second place, Ashley Stevens, third place, June Locke and fourth place, Ruth Perry.

Uptown Video, which has been located in Barre for more than 25 years, was much more than just a video store, said owner Kathy

LOOK BACK
Fiddler on the Roof - 1999



Turley Publications File Photo
Will Gelinas stars as Tevye in “Fiddler on the Roof” at Quabbin Regional High School.

Salvadore. Her husband, Sam Salvadore, had his bicycle shop in the same building and when he semi-retired and lease the space to Subway, he began to sell his stock from Kathy’s store. Over the years the business evolved, as Kathy offered items such as pewter, wind chimes and sports cards in order to bring in additional revenue. Kathy said that her feelings about closing are bittersweet. She has so many memories and will miss her former employees, as well as her customers.

This was the Thanksgiving game that Quabbin fans awaited all season. And it would finally be delivered by the play of Marcello Curci who showed Quabbin Nation that this football team has the potential to go the distance. As in: a superior rushing performance keyed MJ Briggs and Joe Reed which was spurred on by the offensive line play of Quinn Darcy, Emmitt Zalneraitis, Josh Doyle, Devin Gryszyowka and Nick Miller.

25 years ago (Nov. 29, 1995)

Joshua Osborne of New Braintree Road, Oakham, will be appearing as Harvey Johnson in “Bye, Bye Birdie,” presented by the Westfield State College Musical Theatre Guild.

Members of Oakham Den 2 Cub Scouts, all third graders, recently earned belt loops in two area. They received belt loops for physical fitness in the sports program and for geography in the

academic program. Fourth grade Webelos received their communicator activity pins. At the November pack meeting Patrick Carroll, Jeffrey Wells, and Neil Volungis received Bobcat badges. Jacob Thistle received the Bear badge with the gold arrow. New den leaders Bill Aldrich and Dan Carroll, both fourth grader leaders and Eva Wells, and George Werlls, both second grade leaders, got leader recognition patches. At the October pack meeting, Scott Aldrich, Bret Stenger and Mark Tashjian earned their Bobcat badges.

Petersham Lions Club’s annual youth speech contest was held on Nov. 20. Two “outstanding” speakers competed for the club’s \$200 grant and the opportunity to advance to the state’s zone competition in early December. Speakers Jamie Hatch and Peter Bull, both seniors at Mahar Regional High School spoke on this year’s controversial and often questioned “Communications, Should There Be Limits.” By a narrow margin, Jamie Hatch was selected as the 1995-96 Petersham Lions Club winner.

38 years ago (Dec. 1, 1982)

It was a happy Thanksgiving at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Lylis of Union Street and a Happy Reunion as well with their three children, Theodore Jr. from Bristol, Vermont his wife Carole and son Hunter; David

See PAST PAGES, page 5

Column

Wishing for winter squash

You should never take anything for granted, especially when it comes to the garden’s bounty. While it doesn’t seem possible to have 50 winter squash one year and none just a couple years later, that is the predicament I found myself in this fall. I thought I did everything right! I planted the seeds a day or two shy of Memorial Day in a sunny spot that had been fertilized and composted. The seedlings came up strong. I left a floating row cover over them until they were ready to bust through, preventing cucumber beetles from nibbling when they were most vulnerable. But alas, the drought came and with it a dry well. The plants became stressed. Some developed vine borer and/or powdery mildew. While it looked as if I would still get a harvest, this was just wishful thinking. Not long after setting the few fruits I had on the stone wall to cure, most began to rot. Once I realized that this is the way it was heading I gave the rest to the chickens; at least they got to enjoy them.

Gratefully my mom will provide the coveted butter-nut squash for Thanksgiving dinner. There is an easy way to prepare it without peeling and chopping! Simply wash the squash and cut it in half length-wise. Then, scoop out the seeds and bake cut-side down on a greased cookie sheet or in a casserole dish. At 375 degrees, a butternut can take anywhere from 40 minutes to one hour to cook. Test by inserting a fork into the thickest part of flesh; if it goes in easily, it’s done! Scoop out all of the flesh, even the caramelized parts, and mash with a fork or an immersion blender depending on how chunky (or not!) you like it. Season it to taste with cinnamon or better yet, pumpkin pie spice. And if you have a sweet tooth, try adding maple syrup or brown sugar; or even a bit of molasses. A little butter helps too!

Did you know that you can substitute home grown cooked winter squash for any recipe that calls for canned pumpkin, even pumpkin pie? Most folks know that it is squash inside the can anyhow....sweeter and less stringy than their pumpkin cousins. While butternuts are my favorite to grow, I do also like the ‘Delicata’ and ‘Sweet Dumplings’ for taste. They are rich with a depth of flavor. I just wish they were more productive. One plant produces three fruits at the most.

I think I am going to give squash growing a break for a year. Maybe the borers will go away and I’ll be blessed with a good harvest sometime in the future. It would be really sad to think my squash growing days are over. That makes me think about what I should be grateful for this year, garden-wise. Kale, spinach and the cut flowers come to mind...ah, the flowers. I am especially excited about my growing dahlia collection. It would be fun to trade tubers and share the wealth!

But alas, I digress...Let’s get back on topic. Don’t feel the need to gobble up your butternut squash bounty in a hurry; this type of squash has been known to keep through spring and beyond if stored in a dry, 55-degree location. For me, the mudroom has always worked out well to store my winter squash. My mom, on the other hand, has good luck placing hers in trays off the floor in her basement. Happy Thanksgiving everyone!

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

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BARRE GAZETTE

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Have Something
to Share?
Send your stories and
photos to
edowner@turley.com

Serenity Hill Sampler

by Jane McCauley

By the time you read, this Thanksgiving will be a thing of the past and hopefully everyone had a safe holiday. We stayed home and enjoyed a small meal and thought of all our friends.

I had two wonderful days of 60 degrees weather after having three 20 degrees. I did get out into the woods to pick more greens and made the larger wreath for the upper deck and actually placed it there. I also put greens and red ribbons along the front step fence and put the two wreaths on the doors. I heard on the television that people were decorating early this year due to having to stay home due to the virus so I guess I am not the only one decorating early. I put the village up and some Santas. I won't put the artificial tree up until Dec. 1.

I took my big pumpkin that I had next to the cornstalks and cut it open and saved the seeds. I

will give some of the seeds to my homesteader grandson. For those who like to cook up their pumpkins, here is a recipe for pumpkin soup. I personally buy canned pumpkin as it is a job to cut up the pumpkin and cook it.

PUMPKIN SOUP

1 cup chopped green onions
2 tablespoons butter
2 cups mashed pumpkin
1 cup soup stock
1 cup carrots, grated
1/2 teaspoon salt
dash nutmeg
1 cup light cream

Saute onion in butter over low heat until tender. Add pumpkin, soup stock, carrots, salt and nutmeg. Simmer covered for 20 minutes. Stir in cream and serve. Serves 4 to 6.

This and That

I got a very nice note from a friend from Barre that she

enjoys this column. It is nice to hear. She invited me and another friend to a very nice lunch before she moved from Hubbardston to Barre.

I was sorry to read of the passing of Jeffrey Stone of Gardner Road Hubbardston. Also, Virginia Halfrey Bove, a former resident of Hubbardston and later of Florida passed away. Both attended local schools.

I want to give a special thank you to the volunteers at the Hubbardston Senior Center, who give out the groceries and eggs each week. Also thanks to the local farmer, who gives so many delicious vegetables. He knows who he is.

Living in a small community it seems people help out in times of need, which is why I like living in Hubbardston. Stay safe and wear your mask.

Where is this?

This week's mystery photo is from Oakham. If any readers know where this photo was taken, they may email edowner@turley.com or call the Barre Gazette at 413-967-3505, extension 100 with their answer by noon on Monday, Nov. 30. The names of those that correctly guessed the location will appear in next week's edition. The same Where is This pic ran for the past two weeks.

Turley Publications Photo by Ellenor Downer



Guest column

Adventures of Gertrude the Cat

By Ruth Robinson

Dear folks,
I have had quite an adventure this week. Missy's friend had an emergency and needed help I a hurry. So Missy went to her house and took me along as her friend had a cat for me to play with.

It was a long journey up there and you know I hate even that ride to the vets. I was good and only meowed a few times.

When we arrived Missy told me to be good as she would be very busy with her friend's troubles. Her friend's cat and I hit it off right away, which was good. We were both black cats, but Bobby had a short tail and I had a long one. He said he was born that way so he got the name Bobby.

He showed me all around the first floor of the house and then took me upstairs to show me his bed in his mistress's bedroom. After that, he showed me where we would eat and then the little door in the cellar door for us to go downstairs where the potty was located.

The house was new so there was no dirt on the floor and probably no mice, which was all right with me as I don't try to catch them anymore. Then Bobby took me up to the kitchen and promptly jumped up on the counter and them up on the refrigerator to a shelf above that. He urged me to follow. I told him that my old legs wouldn't allow such a caper and besides my mistress wouldn't allow it. Apparently, he does this every day and doesn't get scolded, wow.

After five days we came back home. I hated that ride again, but survived. I was glad to get back to my own food, treats and buttered toast. I didn't enjoy Bobby's brand of food.

Missy was totally exhausted and promptly headed for an afternoon nap and me right behind her. I like to snuggle up against her. Tonight after supper, we will watch our own TV and the programs that Missy likes. Love,
Gertrude



In My Backyard by Ellenor Downer

Workers helping to transport the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree found an adult Northern saw-whet owl clinging to the tree. The tree and owl came from Oneonta to New York City, New York. The owl had no food or water during the three-day trip. It is recovering at a wildlife refuge in New York state.

The owl, now named Rockefeller, is getting fluids and "all the mice he can eat" at the wildlife center. A vet checked it over and took x-rays, but it seems to be in great condition. When ready, it will be released back into the wild.

Northern saw-whet owls are the smallest North American owl and about seven to eight inches long. These owls have yellow eyes, mottled brown feathers with a whitish facial disk and white-spotted head. Juveniles are dark brown with a

cinnamon belly and a white vee between the eyes.

Saw whet owls are nocturnal and hard to see. During daylight, they roost in dense vegetation, typically at eye level and near the trunk of evergreen trees.

Female Northern saw-whet owls lay four to seven white eggs in a nest in a tree cavity or old woodpecker hole. They will also use next boxes.

Thistle feeder

During the warm weather, a bear grabbed my thistle (niger) seed feeder. He pulled it off the hook and left it about 15 feet away. The plastic tube was crushed and the seed ports removed. There was not a single seed to be found in it. The American goldfinches and chickadees kept flying to where the feeder was.

I bought another feeder and put

it out. It did not take them long to find the new feeder. American goldfinches and chickadees love the thistle seed and often three or four eat from the feed perches at once.

Canada geese

Last week, I saw a very large flock of Canada geese in a harvested cornfield. The flock had well over 100 hundred geese. They were probably on their way from Canada to the southern winter grounds.

Bluebirds

My son-in-law, Bryan, saw four bluebirds in his yard last week. He watched them come and go from one of the two bluebird houses in his Barre yard.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100 or emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com.

PAST PAGES continued from page 4

from Killinton, Vermont with his wife Shayne and daughter Erin, and Mrs. Karen Lylis from St. Albans, Maine.

Mr. and Mrs. David Robinson flew to Dallas, Tx. to spend the holidays with their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Raymond St. Helaire and family. They returned to Bradley Field Monday

just in time to bid God-speed to their son, Brian, who flew to the Lone Star State for a three week stay.

Mr. and Mrs. Percy F. Wilbur were honored recently with a reception in Fellowship Room of the Oakham Congregational Church for their sixty-six years of married life. Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur were married September 18, 1916. Two of the Wilburs four sons, Richard of Millbury

and Alfred H. of Auburn and their families were present. The Oakham Grange presented Mrs. Wilbur with a bouquet of roses. The reception followed the church service at which time Percy Wilbur was presented with the Grange Community Service Award for his many services to the town and organizations of the town. The reception was sponsored by the Oakham Grange. Refreshments were served by the Oakham Council on Aging.

Warm Wishes From Our Family to Yours at Thanksgiving

As we gather around with family and friends this holiday, we offer up thanks for the many blessings that make life meaningful. Gifts like friendship, love, health and prosperity make us especially grateful, and we hope you enjoy these same blessings in abundance at this special time of year and always.

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Quabbin field hockey grabs win



BARRE – On Nov. 12, Quabbin field hockey returned to action after a brief hiatus and defeated Narragansett 4-1. Jorji LaViolette, Sydney Giorgi, Alison Michalik and Madylan Alves had the goals for the Panthers in the win.

Michelle Trembley balances the ball on her stick.

Photos by Melina Bourdeau



Natalya Morin eyes a teammate up the field as pressure comes.



Allison Michalik takes a whack.



Sydney Bolger runs after a loose ball.

Winter season postponed till January

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – In a bit of a switch from the normal decision-making processes filtering down, the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference made a pre-emptive decision about the upcoming winter season.

In Western Massachusetts, there will be no winter sports action before Jan. 14. Practices cannot begin before Jan. 4.

Agawam High School Athletic Director David Stratton, a member of the PVIAC Board of Directors, said he believes a similar decision will be made by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association in the coming weeks.

“We looked at a number of things as it related to this decision,” said Stratton.

The top factor was learning

from what schools and communities went through in the fall season.

“A number of towns and their schools had to go in front of their school committees and the respective boards of health,” said Stratton. “And those boards only meet once or twice a month, so it took some times for towns to get the various approvals needed.”

Taking into account a full season will not be played, Stratton said delaying the season to January was the easiest step to take.

Just like the fall season, teams will play in geographic bubbles and will only be able to get about 10 to 12 games at the most played.

Taking into account the holiday breaks as well as the winter weather, the winter season is

See WINTER SPORTS page 8

Indoor track could move to bubble season

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – Could indoor track become outdoor track this year?

Indoor track coaches around the region are looking at the possibility of that if a different solution is not found to hold indoor track when the winter season starts in January.

Indoor track facilities are few and far between in Western Massachusetts.

The teams in the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference have typically used Smith College over the past several years.

Several teams would each participate in one of two meets on

Friday evenings. There would be a meet at 3:45 p.m. and a second meet at 6:45 p.m. Schools would be counted with certain schools matching up their results individually.

Smith College, like many college campuses, are not open for high schools to use for track meets. Springfield College, which has indoor track facilities, is also not available due to the pandemic.

With the Fall 2 or bubble season set to happen in February, coaches are discussing the idea of doing indoor track at the various artificial turf facilities available throughout the region.

“If the weather cooperates, we

See INDOOR TRACK page 8

‘Bubbleville’ schedule released

UNCASVILLE, Conn. – The Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame and Gazelle Group today announced the complete schedule of matchups for the season-opening event known as “Bubbleville.” Games will be played Nov. 25 to Dec. 5 at Mohegan Sun Arena in Uncasville, Connecticut.

Bubbleville will house several events relocated and reimaged due to COVID-19 and provides a controlled environment with teams and event staff adhering to tribal, government, and NCAA health and safety protocols and testing requirements. At this time, all games are expected to be played without fans in attendance.

The event will feature 45 games in 11 days, showcasing 40 NCAA Division I men’s and women’s teams. The schedule will be headlined by several preseason ranked squads including #2 Baylor, #3 Villanova, #4 Virginia, #18 Arizona State and #20 Oregon for the men and #3 UConn, #5 Louisville and #6 Mississippi State for the women. Select games will be available on ESPN networks. All games airing on ESPN networks will also be available on the ESPN App, accessible on computers, smartphones, tablets and connected devices to fans who receive their video subscription from an affiliated provider. All other games will be streamed via FloHoops. The schedule to date is available in the attached PDF, along with broadcast information.

In the coming days, additional games featuring Oregon and Missouri will be added to the schedule on December 2 and 3. Each school will play two games, including one game against each other.

See BUBBLEVILLE page 9

Pioneers shutout at home

PALMER – The Pathfinder Regional High School boys soccer team was defeated 8-0 by rival Monson on Nov. 10, one of the final regular season games for the Pioneers. Goalies Austin Tocci and Rich Gula combined for nine saves in goal.

Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com



Riley Sanderson starts to move up the field with the ball.



Ethan Farrar gets a pass away before the pressure comes.



Kiernan Moe attempts to fake his opponent with some footwork.



Nick Hein receives and tries to settle the ball.

Pioneers join USL Academy League Northeast Division

LUDLOW – The Western Mass. Pioneers have been endorsed as one of the founding members of the USL Academy League’s Northeast Division. The Academy League season is due to kick off in late spring 2021 and will provide clubs in all three of the USL’s senior divisions with an elite youth development and competition platform. As such, the clubs can now develop a more clearly defined path for the top youth prospects in their area to reach the professional and collegiate levels.

The Western Mass. Pioneers are the defending Northeast Conference Champions of USL League Two. The team will begin its 22nd season of play this coming spring – having won a

National Championship in 1999. Over the years, several Pioneers’ players have gone on to the professional ranks; including Thomas McNamara of the New England Revolution and most recently Guzman Diaz of Club Deportivo Maldonado (Uruguay).

“This is a great opportunity for us to start preparing for the USL team in years to come and for players to compete with and against USL players in the future,” stated Pioneers Head Coach Federico Molinari.

The structure of the USL Academy League provides the Pioneers a progressive model to develop local players for their Senior Team, at a fraction of the cost of traditional pre-profession-

al academies. Teams participating in the Academy League will field one elite youth team, made up of the top U15-U19 prospects in their area. Each team will limit the number of U18/19 players and will require a minimum number of U16/U17 players and encourage the clubs to integrate the top U15 players when developmentally appropriate.

“Whether a player is looking for a professional opportunity or a successful college career, the USL Academy League provides the perfect platform to bring together the top youth players in the area. The league is designed to supplement a player’s current program and with no age restrictions this will allow the best players in the

area to develop and compete at the highest level,” added General Manager Joe Ferrara.

For more information on the Academy League and for tryout details contact Joe Ferrara at jfferrara@wmpioneers.com or 413-330-9775.

More than 50 clubs across 25 states comprise the wide geographic footprint of the USL Academy League. The league will be divided into seven regions: Northeast, Atlantic, Southeast, Florida, East Central, South Central and Southwest. The 12 clubs set to compete in the Northeast Division of the USL Academy League and the territories in which they will compete in are as follows:

- Black Rock FC: Lake Placid, NY (USL League Two)
- Boston Bolts: Boston, MA (USL League Two)
- Cedar Stars Academy: South Hackensack, NJ (USL League Two)
- FA Euro New York: New York, NY (USL League Two)
- Hartford Athletic: Hartford, CT (USL Championship)
- Ironbound SC: Newark, NJ (Part of the New York Red Bulls’ player pathway)
- Long Island Rough Riders: Long Island, NY (USL League Two)
- Morris Elite: Madison, NJ (USL League Two)

See PIONEERS page 8

NB SCHOOL
COMMITEE

continued from page 1

Massachusetts, a founding member of the Ohketeau Cultural Council and the Native Youth Empowerment Foundation, has lived in western Massachusetts for most of her life. “People must understand that the oppressions and marginalizations of any racial group are never acceptable. We should not overlook the racism in our children’s educational systems via mascots,” Anderson said. She voiced concern about native students feeling safe and accepted in schools that have these stereotypical mascots, some of which portray Native Americans as war-like and violent. She said indigenous people have the “highest rates of murder, sexual assault, suicide, incarceration and death from police brutality. It can be hard to visualize a future with yourself in it when facing erasure and violence.” Anderson stressed removing offensive or inaccurate mascots will not erase their history, “We need accurate, diverse, historical and contemporary representations in mainstream United States, not harmful stereotypes like native mascots,” she said. “I humbly ask that you vote to replace the Indian name and mascot and image and be on the right side of history.”

Shawna Newcomb, a member of the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe, and also a teacher at Hanover Middle School emphasized the need to be proactive with the removal of the mascot and also to teach the history of indigenous people. Newcomb said her students are often confused when she says she is Native American, because the headdress or war bonnet-wearing stereotype is so deeply ingrained in our culture. She said people have chosen to forget about Native Americans. In regards to removing the mascot, Newcomb said, “Why would we be forced? We should choose to be on the right side of history.”

Sharing his personal story as an indigenous person that has been displaced from his home was Anthony Melting Tallow, a member of the Siksika Nation of Alberta Canada and now a western Massachusetts resident. When asked why the mascot issue is so important, Tallow said “Because we’re teaching the next generation, we’re passing down our values. And unfortunately when it comes to the mascot issue, we’re passing down information and values that are not true and they’ve ended up

having a detrimental impact upon indigenous people’s lives. “He said he never saw any positive images of himself represented during his time as a student, “It’s Native American Heritage Month here in the United States. It’s 2020. It’s time to do right by the next generations....I’m glad that you’re here with your ears open, and your hearts open.”

Next to speak was Penny Gamble-Williams, a member of the Chappaquiddick Tribe of the Wampanoag Nation. She said most people have never thought about the harm that indigenous mascots have. When discussing how this affects Native American children in classrooms today, she said, “when the history is ignored, and no one is really understanding or relating or thinking about anything that’s happening with native people, that’s a problem. And so when you combine that with racist mascots, then it’s a very serious problem.”

Offering perspective, not only as an educator, but as an athlete and coach, was Jamie Morrison of UMass Boston, a descendant of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. He talked about attending a school that had a native mascot, and how the pep rallies often perpetuated racial stereotypes. He said many towns or schools using these mascots, have little to no voices of color. “Most of the schools that have these types of mascots, do very little to no education,” he said. “Whether its the local history, the state or regional history, there’s nothing that’s provided to these students.” Removing the mascot is the first step, but it needs to be followed by including Native American history in the education experience, he said.

The last panelist to present was Brittney Walley, a Nipmuck and her tribe’s anti-mascot representative. Walley said the use of native mascots is dehumanizing and not “educationally sound.” She admitted she felt relieved to be speaking from the safety of her own home, as she never knows how her body will be treated in a community where her culture is disrespected. She shared the history of the indigenous people of North Brookfield, including the fact that the land of the former Quabaog Plantation, was Nipmuck territory. Walley said “our histories are so deeply entangled....I’m asking you to respect my culture. In 2020 today, mascots are a barrier between us.” She encouraged people to reach out to native people

and teach their history.

“Let’s do this together and make a positive change together,” she said.

Previous to the meeting, the committee had posted a form in which residents could register to have time to speak during the meeting. Several residents, some alumni of the school, voiced their feelings on the school’s mascot and how it reflects on North Brookfield as a community.

First to speak was Tashena Holmes, a resident of North Brookfield for 25 years and also of Mi’kmaq descent. She said she experienced discrimination and negative stereotypes in North Brookfield schools, not only because of the mascot, but the lack of accurate teaching of indigenous history. She said at the time this mascot was put in place by the school, her ancestors were not allowed to celebrate their own culture.

Fitzgerald Pucci, was the next to speak, and said the use of the mascot to wearing a uniform that they’ve outgrown and is now “a couple of sizes too small.” He believes that the community can find something new together, and find a symbol “that makes our town’s uniform fit.”

Another alumna of North Brookfield schools to speak was Sophia Hasenfus. She said she regrets not bringing up the issues with the mascot when she was in high school. She said the purpose of a mascot is to create unity and pride, and she hoped the petition that was initially sent to the school committee will hold a little more weight since almost all of the nearly 100 signatures were North Brookfield alumni or residents.

Samantha Laney, a former North Brookfield resident, said that pride in your school mascot is a “pillar of life in this neck of the woods, which is the very reason why we need to change this mascot.”

The last resident to speak was Karen Lee Miller, who has lived here since she was 1-year-old. She talked about her experience in the school, and the pride she felt marching in parades and cheering on her fellow classmates at sporting events. She said she did not understand the negative impact the mascot had at the time. Now as an educator herself, she knows the harm racial stereotypes have on people, especially children.

The committee will vote on the issue at their next meeting on Monday, Dec. 21 at 7 p.m.

Public Safety

Hardwick Police Log

For the week of Nov. 9-16, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department conducted 68 building/property checks, 1 fraud, 1 motor vehicle accident, 5 emergency 911 calls, 1 safety hazard, 11 radar assignments, 26 directed/area patrols, 5 motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

Tuesday, Nov. 10
11:44 a.m. Phone – 911/Hang-up Call Thresher Road – Dispatch Handled
6:39 p.m. 911 – Suspicious Activity Barre Road – Spoken To

Wednesday, Nov. 11
8:36 a.m. Phone – Medical Alarm Hardwick Road – Transported to Hospital
12:48 p.m. 911 – Trespass Greenwich Road – Report Taken
3:58 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Lower Road – Summons Issued

Thursday, Nov. 12
8:39 a.m. 911 – Medical Emergency Church Lane – Services Rendered
2:12 p.m. Phone – Forgery/Fraud Greenwich Road – Report Taken
3:26 p.m. 911 – Motor Vehicle

Accident Lower Road – Transported to Hospital

Friday, Nov. 13
9:43 a.m. Radio – Safety Hazard Silver Bridge – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
3:41 p.m. Initiated – Trespass Greenwich Road – Services Rendered

Sunday, Nov. 15
3:53 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Written Warning
10:48 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Greenwich Road – Services Rendered

New Braintree Police Log

For the week of Nov. 9-16, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department conducted 25 building/property checks, 6 radar assignments, 1 motor vehicle stop, 21 directed/area patrols, 1 safety hazard, 6 traffic controls, 3 animal calls, 1 scam and 1 emergency 911 calls in the town of New Braintree.

RAIL TRAIL
continued from page 1

over a river, or an ownership problem as some pieces are in private hands. It also documents where it may be necessary to leave the trail for short pieces.

Economics

“It’s terrific to have this study, and to continue to draw attention to this huge resource in our community,” said East Quabbin Land Trust Executive Director Cynthia Henshaw, who was asked by the state to review the plan before it was released.

The EQLT has most recently developed a half-mile of the trail in Ware, near the trust’s Frohloff farm on Church Street. It was built as an accessible trail so it is wide and covered in crushed stone. The plan is to connect it to the trust’s already existing portions in New Braintree and Hardwick. The trust is also working on a trail from the farm to Grenville Park, which is also on Church Street in Ware.

Henshaw said more fully developing the trail between towns, such as Ware and Hardwick, can help residents travel to local jobs and shopping. She also said it provides a safe place for people to enjoy nature and to get exercise without being near cars.

Craig Della Penna, who has been involved in the trail for a couple of decades, said developing trails always benefits the communities it runs through. He is a Northampton Realtor who specializes in selling houses close to rail trails.

“When trail projects come through the result is economic development,” he said. “Local small businesses benefit and will locate there, and it’s more lively.” He pointed to Gilbertville’s Rose 32 bakery and restaurant as the type of business that could be attracted to locating along the trail. Part of the existing trail runs between Gilbertville and New Braintree. Rail trails help make communities more viable and liveable, he said. The state used the Gilbertville-Ware covered bridge as one of the sights on the trail during their recent conference last week. Della Penna also runs a website about the MCRT at www.masscentralrailtrail.org/,



Turley Publications staff photo by Paula Ouimette

The Warren Wright Road parking area for the Norwottuck Rail Trail in Belchertown. The state recently released a feasibility report for a portion of the Mass Central Rail Trail, running from Belchertown to the Hudson/Berlin town line.

which has old and new maps.

In fact, the economic vibrancy the trails bring to communities has been part of the reason the state has put an emphasis on creating trails, Della Penna said. The state now has a Trails Committee made up of multiple agencies and they meet every few weeks, he said.

History

The Massachusetts Central Railroad originally ran west from Boston for 104 miles to Northampton, and the state wants to see it use as much of the original rail corridor as possible. It was once possible to get on a train in Boston’s North Station and travel to Northampton’s Union Station, although Paul Jahnige, with the state’s Department of Conservation and Recreation said at a MassDOT conference this week the railroad was abandoned in the early 1900s. A hurricane in 1938 severely damaged the line, and over time some of the line could not even be seen.

Importance

Trails in general, and the MCRT specifically, has been identified as a high priority for the commonwealth’s trail and greenway system, according to the report. It involves MassDOT’s statewide Bike and Pedestrian Plans, the Department of Conservation & Recreation’s Commonwealth Connections, and various local and regional plans, according to the report.

GRAMAROSSA
continued from page 1

they know the people,” she said. “Keeping a coalition going is hard.” The Quaboag Hills Community Coalition and its Substance Use Alliance have worked hard to build coalitions to get to the important work of bringing people together to get important work on education, prevention and recovery services, but individual coalitions can further that work.”

She said the grant will allow the staffers hired to help towns build the capacity needed to work with residents and build their knowledge skills at the same time.

Ware Town Manager Stuart Beckley said she is a good choice because of her skills in bringing people together. “This grant is all about creating partnerships,” he said. “She is extremely good at coordinating with others and bringing people together, particularly from multiple towns. Also, she knows the people in the Quaboag-Quabbin region well.”

Build upon foundation

It will also build on the work the coalition and alliance have done through the federal Drug Free Community grant received sever-

At last week’s virtual 2020 Moving Together conference, MassDOT’s John Bechard described it as a “critical backbone” in creating shared use trails in the state, and said it was the top rail trail priority in the state. He described the feasibility study as a way of kicking the completion of the trail into higher gear, and determining what needs to be done to make it a reality.

The study details approximately 55 miles of undeveloped segments along the MCRR corridor are currently in public, private or conservation ownership. About 33 miles of this trail have already been constructed as off-road, multi-use greenways.

An additional 22 miles of former railroad corridor are owned by the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority and leased by DCR between Coburn Road in Berlin and Linden Street in Waltham, according to the study. This 22-mile corridor is in varying stages of planning, design and construction by the municipalities, DCR and Eversource Energy to develop the 10-foot wide, paved MCRT.

“This trail will knit together slowly over time,” Della Penna said. “It may take a generation.”

The full feasibility report can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/lists/mass-central-rail-trail-feasibility>. Comments and suggestions from the public will be taken through Dec. 1 at <https://tinyurl.com/y6j9r7bp>.

FOOD BANK
continued from page 1

Established in 1982, the Food Bank serves dozens of independent pantries, meal sites, shelters and food assistance programs in western Massachusetts. The operation is a member of Feeding America, a national network of more than 200 food banks.

During the pandemic, the Food Bank’s demand has increased dramatically. Baulding detailed the added responsibility that the facility has assumed over the past eight months.

“We have seen an increase in the amount of people who have needed our services because of COVID,” said Baulding. “Many people have come in for the first time. They may have never thought that they’d ever need assistance from the Food Bank or a food pantry but they do because of job losses.”

Baulding credited the community’s support for keeping the Food Bank alive and thriving during a challenging year. The massive 35,000 square-foot warehouse that employs 45 serves as the headquarters for the entire operation and is currently abuzz with energy and productivity.

“People are working double-time, from the pickers who pick the food and put it together for our member agencies to the volunteers who are in our sorting room who are actually putting boxes of food together. It’s really incredible,” said Baulding.

One of the greatest obstacles that the pandemic has placed before the Food Bank is a dwindling amount of food donations. COVID-19 protocols prohibit the facility from accepting most food donations from the public.

For residents looking to contribute, monetary donations are highly significant and much needed. Baulding noted that monetary



Turley Publications staff photo by Dalton Zbierski

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts operates out of a 35,000 sq. ft. warehouse in Hatfield and serves dozens of member agencies scattered throughout the region.

donations have allowed the Food Bank to make up for absence of food donations that it had been previously accustomed to receiving.

“It’s critical because for every dollar donated, we can provide four full, healthy meals,” said Baulding. “That means one individual could get four meals, and it’s not just one part of the meal; it’s the entire meal, or a family of four could have a dinner. It’s critical, particularly at this time where so many of our neighbors are out of work or maybe their hours have been cut dramatically.”

As temperatures continue to decrease, nutritious meals become more essential. On a regular basis, the Food Bank’s Mobile Food Bank visits 27 locations in western Mass., distributing healthy food items.

“We want to help people stay healthy and strong as they are going through this difficult time,” said Baulding.

On Nov. 23 and 24, the Food Bank will participate in Monte’s

March, a 43-mile masked march that will begin in Springfield and finish in Greenfield, covering three counties. Monte Belmonte, a radio personality for 93.9 WRSI, leads the annual initiative.

Those who participate in the march will push empty shopping carts along the entirety of the route to raise awareness about hunger in the region and funds to stop it in its tracks. This year, the fundraiser aims to raise \$365,000, which is the equivalent of 4,000 meals per day for an entire calendar year.

“We pivoted this year, and it’s going to work. It’s going to be on a smaller scale, and we’re asking people to donate what they can,” said Baulding. “If they can’t come out and march with us, perhaps they can virtually march online, or they can donate on those two days or online as well.”

To register for Monte’s March or donate to the Food Bank, visit <https://www.foodbankwma.org/events/montes-march11/>.

Warrior Project presented by Continental Tire, the HomeLight Classic, the Air Force Reserve Basketball Hall of Fame Tip-Off Tournament, the Air Force Reserve Basketball Hall of Fame Women’s Challenge, the Jimmy V Women’s Classic and sever-

BUBBLEVILLE
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Events taking place in Bubbleville include the Roman Legends Classic presented by Old Trapper, the 2K Empire Classic benefiting Wounded

Worcester County Sheriff’s office and Central Mass Agency to hold winter coat drive

WORCESTER – The need for a warm winter jacket is greater than ever. The pandemic has created challenges for many. To help those most in need in the community, Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis announces a partnership with Dr. Moses Dixon, executive director of Central Mass Agency on Aging for this year’s Sheriff’s Office Annual Winter Coat Drive.

Together, the Worcester County Sheriff’s Office and Central Mass Agency on Aging are determined to continue the tradition of holding one of New England’s largest winter coat drives. Unlike years past, collection boxes for

pre-owned jacket donations cannot be placed in the community due to COVID. This year, they are solely relying on community grants, monetary gifts and new coat donations. Today, they are proud to report they are now up to over 1,100 new winter jackets to help families, children and seniors in need throughout Worcester County. They are hoping with increased media exposure and circulation, they will be able to secure more coat donations, which will help so many during the cold winter months.

Winter Coats will be distributed the first week in December to charitable organizations through-

out Worcester County, including but not limited to: Abby’s House, LIFT, Hector Reyes House, St. John’s Food for the Poor, Webster-Dudley Food Share, Gardner CAC, Alyssa’s Place of Gardner, Spanish American Center of Leominster, Restoration Recovery Center of Fitchburg, Our Father’s House of Fitchburg, Women’s Recovery Program of Leominster, St. Anne’s Human Services of Shrewsbury, Rutland Food Pantry and various senior centers throughout Worcester County.

For more information or to drop off coats, people should contact Donna Ostiguy at 508-796-2638 or dostiguy@worcester

Veterans and Gold Star families granted free access to National Forests and Grasslands

WASHINGTON — Without those brave men and women that served our country and uniform, and without the support of their families, our nation would not be what it is today. To show our gratitude for their selfless service, the USDA Forest Service today announced it will offer U.S. military veterans and Gold Star families fee-free access to their national forests and grasslands.

The free benefit took effect on Veteran’s Day, Nov. 11, 2020, and will continue indefinitely, providing veterans and Gold Star Families with unfettered access to the public land and waters for

which they fought.

“This country is deeply indebted to the dedicated men and women who have served in the military, and to the families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our nation,” said Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen. “We are pleased to offer this free access opportunity as a way to honor them and to encourage them to explore our Nation’s big backyard.”

While most national forest and grasslands are already free to access, the Forest Service will now offer a fee waiver granting veterans and Gold Star families

free access to all Forest Service operated day-use standard amenity recreation fee sites such as trailheads, picnic sites, visitor centers and most other day-use recreation sites. To access the benefit, veterans can present any of several government issued documents verifying veteran status. Gold Star families can download and print a voucher to show a ranger or place on the vehicle dashboard at unstaffed sites.

For more information on the free access program for U.S. military veterans and Gold Star families please visit the Forest Service website.

Baystate Health lists changes in visitor policy

SPRINGFIELD – In response to rising COVID-19 cases in the community, Baystate Health for the safety of patients, caregivers and visitors instituted on Wednesday, Nov. 18 a fluid new Visitor Policy based on the Massachusetts Department of Public Health’s tiered guidelines for the health and safety of patients, caregivers and visitors.

The tiers also referred to as zones are based on the number of COVID-19 positive patients in a city or town and how prevalent the virus is. Red zones are considered at the highest risk for COVID-19 followed in decreasing risk by yellow, green and gray zones.

Baystate Medical Center/ Baystate Children’s Hospital in Springfield, Baystate Noble Hospital in Westfield, and Baystate Wing Hospital in Palmer at this time are in the “red zone”

and will allow no patient visitors. Baystate Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield is in the “green zone” and will allow one visitor.

The numbers will be reviewed weekly and the visitor policy may change in accordance with risk levels and the prevalence of the virus.

Exceptions to the visitor policy at all hospitals, with numbers of persons depending upon what zone the hospital is in at the time, include: parent/guardian for COVID-19 positive and negative children, support person for labor, delivery and duration of hospital stay, hospice/end-of-life or for life-changing diagnosis and support person for patients with disabilities.

If in a zone that allows visitation, the hours continue to be daily from noon-8 p.m.

Baystate Medical Practices and

Baystate Health Centers are also following a tiered guideline based on the region’s risk level.

Additionally, with the recent increase of COVID-19 cases in the community, Baystate Health is transitioning patient care appointments to virtual visits (telehealth or video) whenever applicable.

In place of in-person visits, Baystate Health supports and encourages keeping connected especially during the holidays when wanting to stay in touch with family and friends in the hospital the use of virtual visits through technology such as iPhones, iPads and other devices.

For an up-to-date listing of visitor policies at all Baystate Health hospitals and outpatient sites throughout Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden counties, people may visit BaystateHealth.org/ COVID19.

Tina Sbrega to retire in spring 2021

GARDNER – GFA Federal Credit Union’s President and CEO, Tina M. Sbrega announced her plans to retire as the president and CEO in spring 2021. Sbrega will continue to serve in a leadership role as chair of the wholly owned subsidiary of GFA, Lighthouse Biz Solutions, LLC., advancing their program development and working with their clients.

The Board of Directors of GFA Federal Credit Union has hired D. Hilton Associates to conduct a nationwide search to find its next President and CEO.

“The Board would like to thank Tina for the significant contribution she has made to GFA Federal Credit Union over the past 40 years. Her leadership and vision have helped the credit union achieve so many extraordinary things and her passion to help others has had such a positive impact on the lives of the members, the employees, the Board, and our community,” said Jerry Bankowski, Chief Governance Officer of the Board of Directors. “We wish Tina all the best for her retirement and success in all her future endeavors.”

Sbrega has worked in the finan-



Tina Sbrega

cial industry for more than 45 years and with GFA Federal Credit Union since 1980. She was promoted from her position as the president and Chief Operating Officer into the role of president and Chief Executive Officer in 2009. Under her leadership, GFA Federal Credit Union has increased its branch locations and more than doubled its asset size to nearly \$600 million. As CEO, GFA Federal Credit Union became the first credit union in the nation to purchase a stock owned bank in 2012. More recently, GFA was the first financial institution in MA to provide banking services to the legal, licensed

recreation and medicinal cannabis industry. In 2020, Sbrega was nominated by her team at GFA for the CCUA’s 2020 Award of Excellence and was inducted into CCUA’s Hall of Fame. Tina has received numerous awards over the years for her innovation and community engagement. She has a Bachelor of Business Administration from Roger Williams University in Rhode Island.

“I have had such a tremendously rewarding career; it has been such a fulfilling experience to have had the privilege of serving as the leader of such a quality and forward thinking organization. I have been so fortunate to have had the support, trust and confidence of the Board over the past 12 years to lead the credit union to what it has become, and I am so very grateful for the support of the management, our Better Banking team, and community,” said Sbrega.

GFA Federal Credit Union was created in 1938 by 20 founding fathers who pooled together \$755. Today, this full-service credit union has ten branches as well as a robust online banking system, giving GFA an even broader reach.

Cornerstone Bank appoints Randal Webber president Jan. 1



Randal Webber

WORCESTER – Randal D. Webber will be appointed President at Cornerstone Bank. Currently, Webber serves as the Bank’s EVP, COO and Chief Lending Officer.

“Randy has contributed enormously in helping Cornerstone honor our commitment to enhancing the vitality of local communities and the well-being of all of our customers” states Cornerstone Bank President and Treasurer Todd Tallman, who will assume the role of CEO on January 1. “His strategic and managerial skills go far beyond the lending discipline. I’ve found his insights on retail and digital banking to be invaluable - not only in relation to our products and services, but also the professional development of our team members.”

After joining SpencerBANK in 2009 as SVP, Chief Risk Officer Webber served in increasingly responsible positions until his promotion in 2012 to EVP, Chief Lending Officer. When SpencerBANK and Southbridge Savings Bank created a merger of equals in 2016 to form Cornerstone Bank, Webber was named EVP, Chief Operating Officer. In this executive-level role, he has helped facilitate significant growth of the bank’s commercial and retail service and operations, particularly within its commercial portfolio. He currently serves on the Board of the Worcester State University Foundation.

In a related development, SVP and Senior Commercial Officer Michael J. Quink will be promoted on Jan. 1, 2021, to EVP, Senior Commercial Officer. Prior to his current role, Quink was SVP, Commercial Division Manager at SpencerBANK. He is a Board member of the Horace Mann Education Foundation.

Cornerstone Bank is an independent, mutual savings bank serving the residents, businesses, and communities throughout Central Massachusetts from offices in Charlton, Holden, Leicester, Rutland, Southbridge, Spencer, Sturbridge, Warren, Webster, and Worcester, along with a Loan Center in Westborough.

Beware of scammers as holiday shopping fairs go virtual

REGION - The holiday shopping season is upon us. With the pandemic, many local in-person events, such as popup holiday markets or craft fairs, have moved online. Scammers are creating phony copycat events that charge for admission and steal your credit card information.

How the Scam Works:

You hear that your city’s annual holiday market or another shopping event will be held virtually this year. You search for it online and find a social media post or event page. Besides moving online, one other big thing is different this year. The event, which has been free in the past, is now requiring a paid ticket. You enter your credit card number and personal information, such as full name and address.

Unfortunately, the “ticket” is a scam. The event information you found was posted by scammers and not affiliated with the real holiday market. Con artists are creating fake event pages, social posts and emails to confuse attendees into sharing their credit card information.

In another twist on this scam, some virtual holiday markets have a website or social media page where vendors can post photos of their products and links to their websites. Be careful here too. Some consumers reported to BBB that they clicked the links provided, thinking they lead to an online shop. Instead, the sites downloaded malware.

Tips to avoid holiday event scams:

Is there an admission fee? Visit

the event’s website to see if you need to purchase an admission ticket for the virtual event. If not, watch for scammers trying to claim otherwise. If this happens, message the event coordinator to help prevent other virtual attendees from being scammed.

Research vendors and the host. If the event is unfamiliar to you, research the host and list of vendors ahead of time. While virtually browsing from booth to booth, make sure you are only clicking on the links provided. If you are unsure if a shop is legitimate do an online search for that vendor’s store rather than follow the link provided.

Use a credit card. When making any purchases, use your credit card. This way if anything gets charged that wasn’t supposed to be, you can file a claim with your credit card company.

Keep your receipts. Make note of all of your purchases and save your receipts. If you have a question about a product or need to make a return, you will have the vendor’s information readily available.

Know the return policy. Before making a purchase, ask the vendor what their return policy is so you will not run into issues after the holidays.

Read more about holiday popup shops and event scams on BBB.org. Find out more about online event scams on Event Industry News. Click here for BBB’s tips for buying tickets to an event.

If you’ve been targeted by this scam, help others by filing a scam report at BBB.org/ScamTracker.

COVID clinical study scams target victims electronically

REGION - Thought we had seen the end of COVID-19 scams, think again. Scammers are sending out text messages promoting participation in phony clinical studies. Don’t be tempted by the opportunity to help scientists while making extra cash. Make sure it’s the real thing before you sign up.

How the Scam Works

You receive an unsolicited message via text, email, or a social media message. It explains that you may qualify for a COVID-19 study, which pays upwards of \$1,000. One version received by BBB staff read: “Local Covid19 Study: Compensation up to \$1,220! Qualify Here: [link removed] stop2stop.”

No matter how curious you are - or how much you could use an extra \$1,200 - don’t click. It’s a scam! The phony message includes a link to see whether or not you qualify for the study. If you click it, you could unknowingly download malware onto your computer or phone. This virus can give scammers access to your usernames, passwords, and other personal information stored on

your computer.

In other cases, the link may take you to a website that looks like a real clinical trial. You will be asked for personal information, such as government ID or bank account numbers. Real medical researchers would never ask for this information during the screening process.

How to Avoid Clinical Trial Scams

Look up the domain. Use look-up.icann.org to look up the URL. Look for warning signs such as a very recent registration date or registration in a foreign country.

Think the trial is real? Find it on the official website. If you receive a message about a study and want to confirm whether it’s true, go directly to (or do a web search for) the organization’s website for further information. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Library of Medicine (NLM) also maintain ClinicalTrials.gov, a free searchable database of clinical studies on a wide range of diseases. If there is no government agency, university, or hospital mentioned, it’s likely a scam.

Never pay to be part of a clinical trial. Real clinical trials will never ask you to pay them.

Legitimate clinical trials do gather information about candidates - but not financial information. To screen for participants, a real study might ask for your name, contact information, age, gender, race, ethnicity, or various pre-existing medical conditions. But they should never ask you for information like your bank account details.

Public Notices

BARRE PLANNING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

The Barre Planning Board will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, December 1, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.** at the American Legion, Post 2, 450 South Barre Road requested by Ted Strzelecki and Solar Wolf Energy for the installation of two ground mount systems per Town of Barre, Zoning, Chapter 140-10.1 Solar Energy Facilities

Special Permit and Site Plan Review for property located at 582 Wauwinet Road, Assessors Map E, Lot 60. The plan may be viewed at the Planning Board Office by appointment.

Anyone wishing to comment on this matter should attend the hearing or submit comments in writing prior to the hearing to the Planning Board.

Douglas Martin
Chairman
11/19, 11/26/2020

TOWN OF NEW BRAINTREE CLASSIFICATION HEARING NOTICE

The Select Board, acting under the provision of Chapter 369 of the acts of 1982, will hold a public hearing at **10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 8, 2020**, at the New Braintree Town Hall for the purpose of determining the percentages of the local tax levy to be borne by each class of property (residential, open

space, commercial, industrial and personal) for the fiscal year.

Interested taxpayers will be allowed the opportunity to present their views orally or in writing at said hearing.

Randy Walker, Chair
C. William Howland
Joseph Chenevert
SELECT BOARD
11/26/2020

NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue’s relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for the Barre Gazette, please email edowner@turley.com.

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WE’VE EXPANDED OUR WEB SITE PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com

2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.

3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts’ public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

BUSINESS

Turley Publications is liberal with regard to its business coverage policies, but we do have some standards folks need to understand. First, local businesses and merchants are just as much institutions in our towns as the library and schools. Without them, there are no towns.

We will feature coverage of local businesses that are new, have a major expansion, moving, closing, under new management or ownership, celebrating a milestone anniversary, or have been thrust into the news realm. Merchants can request that coverage through the editor, or for our existing advertising clients, through their ad representatives.

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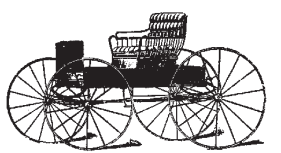
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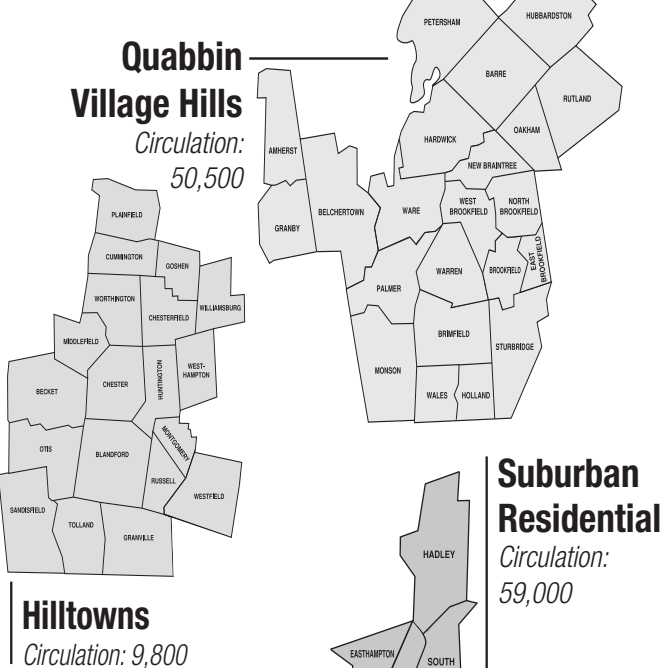
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**Deadline for photos and forms is
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OUR CLASSIFIEDS REACH 50 COMMUNITIES EVERY WEEK!

OSV and Country Bank partner for over 10 years

STURBRIDGE – Old Sturbridge Village and Country Bank have partnered together for over a decade. In that time, Country Bank has sponsored numerous seasonal programs at the Village such as, the Education Center, Visitor Center, Bump in the Night, Sleepy Hollow, Phantoms & Fire and the beloved Christmas by Candlelight. In addition to program sponsorships, Country Bank has also sponsored Old Sturbridge Village’s Annual Gala over the years as well.

Perhaps one of the greatest sponsorships that Country Bank is supporting, particularly in this year of COVID, is the Kids Free Program. This has enabled families to enjoy the activities, history, programming, traditions and opportunities that Old Sturbridge Village has to offer making it a great value for families. This year, Country Bank extended its Kids Free sponsorship from June through the end of November. Both organizations wanted to ensure that all families had every

opportunity this year to participate in the outdoor experience the Village offers.
“Country Bank has a long-standing commitment to Old Sturbridge Village and its historical place within our communities. As New England’s largest outdoor living history museum, the Village welcomes thousands of visitors annually where they offer authentic hands-on history and seasonal programming for all ages,” stated Paul Scully, President and CEO of Country

Bank. “As a community partner, we care deeply about the sustainability of the village. As such, and in recognizing the burdens that our communities have experienced throughout this year, we wanted to offer our support in sponsoring the fall and winter season events at the village. It is our hope that visitors will enjoy an afternoon or evening stepping back in time and making memories with their friends and families during what has been the most stressful time in our histo-

ry. Supporting and enriching our communities is not only a part of our mission, it’s simply who we are.”
“We are extremely grateful for the support of Paul Scully and his strong team at Country Bank,” stated Jim Donahue, President and CEO of Old Sturbridge Village. “The partnership, over the years, has enabled us to make significant contributions to the community while building dynamic programming throughout the year for our visitors. We

continue to find ways of collaborating and giving back to the community which is a core priority with both our organizations.”
Old Sturbridge Village and Country Bank will be collaborating this upcoming Thanksgiving to serve families in the community with over 700 meals. Old Sturbridge Village will be cooking and assembling the meals, while Country Bank will be distributing the meals out to food pantries, senior housing, churches and alike.

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